THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts."—PETER.

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READING AND REFLECTION.

BY ELDER DAVID JOHN.

Among the many means of acquiring information and improving the mind, is that of reading. Books are instruments of knowledge; but it requires taste and judgment to make a good and useful selection. It is possible to store the memory with romances and all kinds of light literature; but it should be taken into consideration, before choosing or reading a book, how much real and useful knowledge we are likely to gain by its perusal.

Again: It is in the power of the human mind to commit the whole pages of a valuable book to memory, without discovering any truth or beauty connected therewith, because the reader does not think; and if not, he does not understand; hence he gains no knowledge, and cannot progress. But when he thinks, reflects, and searches to the bottom of the subject of his reading, he will understand it, and his judgment will become more and more powerful. One author says—

"When we are searching out the nature and properties of anything by various methods of trial, or when we apply some active powers or set some causes to work, to observe what effects they would produce, this sort of observation is called experiment. So when I throw a bullet into water, I find it sinks; and when I throw the same bullet into quicksilver, I see it swims; but when I beat out this bullet into a thin hollow shape like a dish, then it will swim in the water too. So when I strike two flints together, I find they produce fire: when I throw a seed into the earth, it grows up into a plant. All these belong to the first method of knowledge."

As it is not the amount of food which we eat that gives us strength, but the portion which we digest, so also it is not the number of books which we read that gives us knowledge, but the portion that we understand. One page carefully read and perfectly understood imparts more knowledge than a whole volume without reflection.

Those who have read the most are often supposed to understand the most, but this is not always the case. Reading only supplies the mind with the materials of knowledge: it is by thought and reflection that we make what we read our own. By reviewing what we read and meditating on the thoughts of others laid down before us, one idea begets another; reflection on one simple truth generates another; or, in other words, it will point it out; and those ideas and truths attained by reflection may be called our own. Thus man will progress or rise in the scale of intelligence by his own energies and mental exercise, which is the sure road to greatness and the only true foundation of power.

Hence we may say that one hour's reading and two hours' reflection will be far more likely to improve the mind than two hours' reading and one hour's reflection.

Again: To render our reading hours profitable, we should be void of all prejudice. This has been a general complaint and cause of failure in every age of the world; but never has it been stronger than at present. It is a great hindrance to knowledge, and has in its very nature a tendency to lead its possessor into difficulties and error. Those who desire to tread in the footsteps of the wise and attain valuable and useful knowledge must rid themselves of this most dangerous impostor, for it dresses up error in the garb of truth and keeps men's minds in the dark, with a belief that they are more in the light than any others.

Impartiality also should characterize our searchings after truth. When this is not the case, we may give what is really false the force of truth, because we wish it to be true. We should not fall in love with any doctrine or principle and wish it to have such force from a mere opinion that it is true. We should contend earnestly for the true faith, but we should first be sure that it *is* the true faith. We should love the truth because it is truth, and for no other reason. Our opinion and zeal, though ever so sincere or warm, will not excuse us for taking truth for error, or error for truth. Examination and meditation will endow the mind of every man with power to judge for himself and enable him to determine the difference between what is reasonable and what is unreasonable.

We may attain much knowledge by reading histories of the past; but there is no history that can be so beneficially studied as that of the restoration of the everlasting Gospel in these latter days, the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ, and the modern revelations received through the Prophet Joseph. Nothing can be more useful and instructive than reading the works of our own Church and reflecting upon their sublime principles and truths. All the books of the Church, however, may be read over and over again without discovering the real character and worth of their contents. Hence reflection should always accompany reading, so that the reader may be edified and his mind improved.

THE VISITOR.

A CONFERENCE PRESIDENT'S VISIT.—THE EFFECT AND ITS CAUSE.

During a late visit to one of the farthest-off Branches in my Conference, the following conversation took place at the house of Elder T., the President of the Branch:—

"Well, brother T.," said I, "and how are you getting along in your Branch? Are your numbers increasing?"

"I should indeed be happy to report progress in that direction, brother H.," he replied; "but I am sorry to say that we have had no new candidates for baptism lately, and but few inquirers after truth. Strangers rarely attend our meetings now. Occasionally we have a visit or two, but the same persons seldom come more than once or twice."

"Indeed! And what do you set down as the cause of that?"

"Well, I do not know what the cause of it can be, except the general prejudice that exists in the minds of the people against the Saints, and a common hatred on their part towards the truth."

"And how do the Saints themselves attend to their duties now? I thought the meetings were but thinly attended the the last time I visited your Branch."

"Why, brother H., I must confess that the members of the Branch are getting very dilatory and are sadly neglecting their duties."

"There must be a cause for all this, brother T.; and we must endeavour to get at that—the root of the evil, and try to remove it. You know it is an old saying, 'Remove the cause, and the effect will cease.'"

"Yes. But what that cause is I cannot imagine. There have been more cut off in this Branch for neglect of duty within the last twelve months than during any two years previously. I endeavour to give the Priesthood and the members

good counsel both at the Sunday and week-evening meetings, and labour hard to spur them on to their duty, but in many cases without effect. Some of the dilatory ones will readily acknowledge the truth of what I may say, and become more punctual in their attendance for a short time, but soon begin to flag again, until they are at last roused by a summons to Council, which results in either a promise of amendment or suspension from fellowship, if not entire excommunication from the Church. Such has been too often the case, which has considerably reduced our numbers. But still I am glad to say that we have at the present time some few very good and faithful Saints in our Branch, who take an interest in the work of God; and I hope that by-and-by their numbers will increase."

"I sincerely hope so, too, brother T. But let us try and find out the *cause* of the unfortunate fallings-off and neglect of duty, which you refer to. One saved now is better than hoping to gain two by-and-by. Are your officers all actively engaged in the duties of their calling?"

"Why, no—not exactly. *Some* are."

"What is the use of a man's nominally holding an office, unless he has duties to fulfil pertaining to that office?"

"Well, I think that most of those among the officers who regularly attend the meetings are engaged in visiting the members in their several districts once a week; two or three in their turn assist in the Sunday school; and some few do also a little tract distributing."

"*So far*, so good. But how do you arrange your Sunday preaching duties?"

"I generally occupy the time before the administration of the sacrament myself in instructing the Saints and Priesthood; and in the evening I sometimes give the Saints a little counselling, and sometimes preach upon some of the first principles of the Gospel. Or, if I do not feel like preaching myself, I call upon Elder D., and sometimes Elder E., to speak: in which case, I generally close by some remarks myself upon the subject of the discourse which has been delivered."

"And what is your plan of conducting the week-evening meetings?"

"I always preside over those meetings myself, whenever I can attend them; and, as a general rule, I give the Saints such instructions as I consider necessary for about half-an-hour; after which, I deliver the meeting into the hands of the Priesthood and Saints for testimony, &c., and conclude by giving a little counsel to all present as circumstances require."

"And how do the Saints attend these fellowship meetings?"

"Not so well as I would wish them to do. And some out of the few who *do* attend seem as if they cannot get out of the habit of coming in when the meeting is half over. Somehow or other, many of the Saints, although they are naturally a good people, do not take that *interest* in the work that they should, and which I would like to see them take."

"Ah, brother T., I now begin to see the whole matter in a little clearer light; and I think I can give a tolerably true guess as to the cause of the evils of which you complain. Did you read President Calkin's remarks at the Special Council, given in *Star* No. 9, present Volume?"

"Yes."

"And also the Editorials of Numbers 21, 23, 25, 27, and 28?"

"I believe I have read all of them."

"Then it really does appear to me, brother T., that you have not *carried out* the instructions there given—at least, not to the extent designed. In the course of his instructions at the Special Council, President Calkin said—

'It is the duty of a Branch President to select men of wisdom from his Branch to instruct, counsel, and direct the Saints, and teach them to live their religion. . . If your Branch President will attend to all this, he will do his legitimate work—his duty. If, in addition to all this, he can do a portion of the preaching, so much the better. But suppose he cannot—suppose he does not possess the faculty for preaching at all, he may be one of the best Presidents notwithstanding. If he understands his duties, he can call out men who *can* preach. Then the preaching will be done, and the governing and presiding will be done, and all will be right. Teach your Branch Presidents, brethren, that they are not to be *all in all* in their Branches. They are not required to *do it all*. The best Branch Presidents do but *little* work *themselves*, comparatively speaking; that is, they do not go round and visit all the Saints, *do all the preaching*, and *give all the counsel*, and be *all in all* in the Branch; but they call out the talent in their Branches, and set the whole of it in operation, and thus accomplish more good than if they did it all themselves. . . A reformation is needed in your morning and mid-day Sunday meetings,

. . Call out your young men—your boys. Nobody but Saints are in those meetings: there are no strangers by; and if they make a small blunder occasionally, nobody will be hurt by it. . . Call them out and give them an opportunity to show themselves. Three or four pithy speeches from these young men would give new life to these meetings, change the monotony, give variety and interest to them, and the result would be to call the Saints out to them. *There would be something to come for.* It would bring out this talent, and the brethren would show what they are and prove themselves. . . A word now about the evening meetings. Strangers attend these meetings, and they come for the purpose of hearing the Gospel. Let them, when strangers are there, be *devoted to preaching the Gospel.* The Saints will have been preached to enough during the *former* part of the day. *Let them alone*, and introduce the Gospel to the *strangers.* . . Let men be called for this purpose who can preach the Gospel so as to interest the stranger, touch his understanding, set his judgment to work, and influence him to investigate the principles that are advanced. *Then* you will get the honest in heart to seek after the truth. Your testimony meetings want reforming, most of them. . . Make them times of life and joy, instead of the dull, dreamy, yawning things they are now. They should be held on a week-night, as a general thing, and *devoted to the brethren and sisters* for bearing testimony; *after* which, *if* the President has any instruction or counsel to give, let him do it BRIEFLY and spiritedly.'

In his Editorial upon the "Spirit of the Times," President Calkin also says, in reference to the Presiding Elders, that

"In many instances, they are too much in the habit of talking about business matters and other things that belong exclusively to the Saints, and that should be confined to the meetings devoted to counselling and instructing the Church, when there are no strangers present. We hope the Elders will set themselves at once to remedy this.'

In his "Hints to Presiding Elders and Preachers," in No. 25, he also particularly directs attention to the Editorials of Nos. 4, 13, 42, 43, 47, and 48 of Vol. XX. The whole of these, together with those which I have already referred to, are well worthy your re-perusal. Among many other valuable hints, are the following:—

'We hope by this time all the presiding officers will understand that they have *assistants* among the *Elders and Priests* for the preaching of the Gospel to the world. We hope they have not to learn, after all we have said, that though it is one of their privileges to preach, it is their *special* duty to *preside.* . . . In every Branch possessing the opportunity, is there a meeting expressly devoted to the preaching of the Gospel? In some cases are they not devoted to anything but that for which they were originally designed? . . . Is not the time taken up in "talking" to the Saints, and and sometimes about such matters and in such a style that at least none but the speaker can understand? . . Do the Presidents of Branches call those qualified and suitable to address their congregations? . . . Do they not too generally call those to preach the Gospel to the world who are *not* qualified, suitable, or endowed with the gift of that calling? Do they not too often introduce their pets and favourites? Are not many in their choice insensible to those peculiar natures adapted especially to the preaching of the Gospel? . . . One of the most common and disagreeable habits which Presidents of Branches fall into is that of *much speaking.* . . . We have repeatedly told the Presidents—meaning particularly those of Branches, that it is their calling to *preside* and *direct*, and not to speak, speak, speak eternally. They have plenty of assistants and mouthpieces. By their much speaking, they also not only lose the power to instruct and edify the Saints, but they dishonour and do injustice to their brethren of the Priesthood who have received the authority and gift of God to preach the Gospel. . . . Besides this, it tires and wears out the Saints. The meetings grow uninteresting, and they feel careless about attending them. . . . . The Presidents of Branches have often blamed the Saints for this, and 'whipped' them severely, in consequence. We will, after their long indulgence in this error, correct it, and put the burden on the right shoulders; for the wrong ones have borne the burden long enough. The fault is not with the Saints, but with the President. It is *his* duty to *make* the meetings interesting and attractive, and to draw attendance by the character and spirit of the meetings. It would not be a very difficult matter to get good Saints to attend, *if the meetings were worth attending.* . . . We advise our presiding brethren who have fallen into the habit in question to *speak less* and direct more. . . . There are some who have erred so egregiously in the habit of much speaking that, as a general thing, they will deliver a short discourse of at least a quarter-of-an-hour's length every Sunday morning or afternoon, and not unfrequently close with a short sermon. The same routine goes on at night, and the same at the week-night meetings; and withal the

necessary (?) speech even at "testimony meetings" often extends to half-an-hour's length! In their anxiety for the benefit of the Saints, they entertain the mistaken notion that it is *necessary* for them, as Presidents of Branches, to speak thus often. . . . An ungenerous critic would say that in such cases the Saints must be miraculously quick and precocious to digest all the instruction, or the President must 'talk' a great deal to no purpose. . . . Believe us, brethren, that much speaking is an error at best; and we hope that, for your own good, as well as that of the Saints and the cause, you will correct this disagreeable and pernicious habit!'

These hints and instructions, brother T., are only a few out of the many contained in the Editorials of the past and present years referred to. But these passages which I have now read to you are sufficient for the purpose in hand. What do you think of them?"

"They are very good, I must admit, and as just and wise as they are plain and pointed," replied Elder T. "At the same time, I must acknowledge that I have not carried them out into practice so fully as I should have done."

"If you had, your Branch would not be in so unhealthy and unthriving a condition as you now represent it to be in. You say that strangers rarely attend your meetings; that those who do visit them seldom attend more than once or twice; that not a few of your members and Priesthood are very dilatory, neglect their duty, and take but little interest in the work; indeed, that more have been disfellowshipped and cut off during the last twelve months for neglect of duty than during any previous two years. Is that so?"

"Yes, I believe it is."

"Then, I repeat, for that effect there must be a cause; and that cause, I believe, to a great extent, lies with *yourself*. You do not conduct your meetings upon the plan laid down in the Editorials referred to. Instead of actively engaging your officers in the duties of their calling as far as possible, and honouring and recognizing their Priesthood, you cover them over by doing the work yourself, and allow them as it were to rust for want of employment. They are not likely to 'feel an interest in the work,' when they have little or no part or lot in the performance of that work. If you want them to *take* an interest in the meetings, *give* them an interest in them. If you want them to attend to their duties, give them duties to perform, and not monopolize everything yourself, making yourself 'ALL *in all*,' and them *nothing at all*. Do you not know that your Priests and Elders are empowered by virtue of their office to preach the Gospel, instruct and exhort the Saints, and administer the various ordinances of the Church?"

"Yes, I am well aware of it."

"Then endeavour in future to act upon it. Do not do all the preaching and counselling yourself, but appoint others to do it. Distribute among the Priesthood the different portions of work to be done, honouring all in their several callings, according to the nature of the duty required to be performed in the various seasons thereof, and according to the wants of the time. Avoid all stereotyped sameness, and endeavour to give variety and interest to the meetings. Make each meeting consistent with itself and answering to the requirements of the occasion. Let *your* operations be suitable to each meeting, and so direct the operations of others in the fulfilment of *their* duties and callings and in the exercise of their gifts and privileges, that spirit, variety, and interest will be the natural result. It is not necessary that you should personally perform every duty, discharge every function, exercise all the privileges of the Priesthood and the Saints; but bear in mind that you are a *President*, whose "special duty" it is to *preside*, *govern*, and *direct others* in the performance of the different portions of the work. You will find, by at once adoping these hints, that both the Priesthood and Saints will take a more lively interest in the work, and your cases of excommunication for neglect of duty will become fewer and farther between. You will find also, by carrying into effect the various editorial hints in reference to public preaching meetings, that strangers will be more likely to attend them and to continue their visits, the Saints will be benefited, and your numbers will increase."

"I sincerely thank you, brother H., for your kind and candid advice. I will forthwith turn over a new leaf, and put your instructions into practice; and I trust that when you next visit us, you will find a considerable change effected for the better."

"I hope so, brother T. Do that, and all will be well."

HISTORY OF JOSEPH SMITH.

(*Continued from page 444.*)

[July, 1843.]

In the meantime, Major-General Lucas and Brigadier-General Wilson, both of Jackson County, (who had, five years previously, assisted in driving about 1,200 "Mormon" citizens from that county, besides burning 203 houses, and assisting in murdering several, and plundering the rest,) raised forces to the amount of several thousand men, and appeared before the city of Far West in battle array.

A few of the Militia then paraded in front of the city, which caused the cowardly assailants to come to a halt at about a mile distant, in full view of the town.

A messenger arrived from them and demanded three persons before they massacred the rest and laid the town in ashes. The names of the persons demanded were Adam Lightner, John Clemenson, and his wife. They gave no information who this army were, nor by what authority they came; neither had we at that time any knowledge of the Governor's order, nor any of these movements, the mail having been designedly stopped by our enemies for three weeks previously. We had supposed, on their first appearance, that they were friendly troops sent for our protection; but on receiving this alarming information of their wicked intentions, we were much surprised, and sent a messenger with a white flag to inquire of them who they were, and what they wanted of us, and by whose authority they came.

This flag was fired upon by Captain Bogard, the Methodist priest, who afterwards told me the same with his own mouth. After several attempts, however, we got an interview, by which we learned who they were, and that they pretended to have been sent by the Governor to exterminate our people.

Upon learning this fact, no resistance was offered to their will or wishes. They demanded the arms of the Militia, and forcibly took them away. They requested that Mr. Joseph Smith and other leaders of the Church should come into their camp for consultation, giving them a sacred promise of protection and safe return. Accordingly, Messrs. Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Lyman Wight, George W. Robinson, and myself started in company with Colonel Hinkle to their camp, when we were soon abruptly met by General Lucas with several hundreds of his soldiers, in a hostile manner, who immediately surrounded us, and set up the most hideous yells that might have been supposed to have proceeded from the mouths of demons, and marched us as prisoners to their lines.

There we were detained for two days and nights, and had to sleep on the ground, in the cold month of November, in the midst of rain and mud,—were continually surrounded with a strong guard, whose mouths were filled with cursing and bitterness, blackguardism and blasphemy,—who offered us every abuse and insult in their power, both by night and day; and many individuals of the army cocked their rifles and, taking deadly aims at our heads, swore they would shoot us.

While under these circumstances, our ears were continually shocked with the relation of the horrid deeds they had committed and which they boasted of. They related the circumstance in detail of having, the previous day, disarmed a certain man in his own house, and took him prisoner, and afterwards *beat out his brains with his own gun*, in presence of their officers. They told of other individuals lying here and there in the brush, whom they had shot down without resistance, and who were lying unburied for the hogs to feed upon.

They also named one or two individual females of our society, whom they had forcibly bound, and twenty or thirty of them, one after another, committed rape upon. One of these females was a daughter of a respectable family with whom I have been long acquainted, and with whom I have since conversed and learned that it was truly the case. Delicacy at present forbids my mentioning the names. I also heard several of the soldiers acknowledge and boast of having stolen money in one place, clothing and bedding in another, and horses in another, whilst corn, pork, and beef were taken by the whole army to support the men and horses; and in many cases cattle, hogs, and sheep were shot down, and only a small portion of them used,—the rest left to waste. Of these crimes, of which the soldiers boasted, the general officers freely conversed and corroborated the same. And even Gen. Doniphan, who professed to be opposed to such proceedings, acknowledged the truth of them, and gave us several particulars in detail.

I believe the name of the man whose brains they knocked out was Carey; and another individual, who had his chest broken open and several hundred dollars in specie taken out, was the same Smith Humphrey whose house the mob burned at De Witt.

After the "Mormons" were all disarmed, General Lucas gave them a compulsory

order for men, women, and children to leave the State forthwith, without any exceptions, counting it a mercy to spare their lives on these conditions. Whilst these things were proceeding, instead of releasing us from confinement, Hyrum Smith and Amasa Lyman were forcibly added to our number as prisoners; and under a large military escort, commanded by General Wilson before mentioned, we were all marched to Jackson County, a distance of between fifty and sixty miles, leaving our families and our friends at their mercy, in a destitute condition, to prepare for a journey of more than two hundred miles, at the approach of winter, without our protection, and every moment exposed to robbery, ravishment, and other insult, their property robbed, and their houses and lands already wrested from them.

We were exhibited like a caravan of wild animals on the way and in the streets of Independence, and were also kept prisoners for a show for several days.

In the meantime, General Clark had been sent by Governor Boggs with an additional force of 6,000 men from the lower country, to join General Lucas in his operations against the "Mormons." He soon arrived before Far West with his army, and confirmed all Lucas had done, and highly commended them for their virtue, forbearance, and other deeds in *bringing about so peaceable and amicable an adjustment of affairs.* He kept up the same scene of ravage, plunder, ravishment, and depredation, for the support and enrichment of his army, even burning the houses and fences for fuel.

He also insisted that every man, woman, and child of the "Mormon" society should leave the State, except such as he detained as prisoners, stating that *the Governor had sent him to exterminate them*, but that *he* would, as a *mercy*, *spare* their *lives*, and gave them until the 1st of April following to get out of the State.

He also compelled them, at the point of the bayonet, to sign a deed of trust of all their real estate, to defray the expenses of what *he* called "THE MORMON WAR."

After arranging all these matters to *his* satisfaction, he returned to Richmond, thirty miles distant, taking about sixty heads of families with him, and marching them through a severe snow-storm on foot, as prisoners, leaving their families in a perishing condition.

Having established his head-quarters at Richmond, Ray County, he sent to General Lucas and demanded us to be given up to him. We were accordingly transported some thirty or forty miles, delivered over to him, and put in close confinement in chains, under a strong guard.

At length we obtained an interview with him, and inquired why we were detained as prisoners. I said to him, "Sir, we have now been prisoners, under the most aggravating circumstances, for two or three weeks, during which time we have received no information as to why we are prisoners, or for what object, as no writ has been served upon us. We are not detained by the civil law; and as ministers of the Gospel in time of peace, *who never bear arms*, we cannot be considered prisoners of war, especially as there has been no war; and from present appearances, we can hardly be considered prisoners of hope. Why, then, these bonds?"

Said he, "You were taken to be tried." "Tried by what authority?" said I. "By Court-martial," replied he. "By Court-martial?" said I. "Yes," said he. "How," said I, "Can men, who are not military men, but ministers of the Gospel, be tried by Court-martial in this country, where every man has a right to be tried by a jury?" He replied, it was according to the treaty with General Lucas, on the part of the State of Missouri, and Colonel Hinkle, the commanding officer of the fortress of Far West, on the part of the "Mormons," and in accordance with the Governor's order. "And," said he, "I approve of all that Lucas has done, and am determined to see it fulfilled." Said I, "Colonel Hinkle was but a Colonel of the Caldwell County Militia, and commissioned by the Governor, and the "Mormons" had no fortress, but were, in common with others, citizens of Missouri; and therefore we recognize no authority in Colonel Hinkle to sell our liberties or make treaties for us.

Several days afterwards, General Clark again entered our prison, and said he had concluded to deliver us over to the civil authorities. Accordingly, we were soon brought before Austin A. King, Judge of the Fifth Circuit, where an examination was commenced, and witnesses sworn, at the point of the bayonet, and threatened on pain of death, if they did not swear to that which would suit the Court.

During this examination, I heard Judge King ask one of the witnesses, who was a "Mormon," if he and his friends intended to live on their lands any longer than April, and to plant crops? Witness replied, "Why not?" The Judge replied, "If you once think to plant crops or to occupy your lands any longer than the first of April, the citizens will be upon you; they will kill you every one—men, women, and children, and leave you to manure the ground without a burial. They have been mercifully withheld from doing this on the present occasion, but will not be restrained for the future."

On examining a "Mormon" witness, for the purpose of substantiating the charge of treason against Mr. Smith, he questioned him concerning our religious faith:—1st. Do the Mormons send missionaries to foreign nations? The witness answered in the affirmative. 2nd. Do the Mormons believe a certain passage in the Book of Daniel (naming the passage), which reads as follows:—"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the Saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him?" (Dan. vii. 27.) On being answered in the affirmative, the Judge ordered the scribe to put it down as a strong point for treason; but this was too much for even a Missouri lawyer to bear. He remonstrated against such a course of procedure, but in vain. Said he, "Judge, you had better make the Bible treason."

After an examination of this kind for many days, some were set at liberty, others admitted out on bail, and themselves and bail expelled from the State forthwith, with the rest of the "Mormon" citizens. And Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Lyman Wight, and others, were committed to the Clay County jail for further trial. Two or three others and myself were put into the the jail at Ray County for the same purpose.

The "Mormon" people now began to leave the State, agreeable to the exterminating order of Governor Boggs. Ten or twelve thousand left the State during the winter, and fled to the State of Illinois.

A small number of the widows and the poor, together with my family and some of the friends of the other prisoners, still lingered in Far West, when a small band of armed men entered the town and committed many depredations and threatened life; and swore that if my wife and children, and others whom they named, were not out of the State in so many days, they would kill them, as the time now drew near for the completion of the exterminating order of Governor Boggs.

Accordingly, my wife and children and others left the State as best they could, wandered to Illinois, there to get a living among strangers, without a husband, father, or protector. Myself and party still remained in prison, after all the other "Mormons" had left the State; and even Mr. Smith and his party had escaped to bring up the rear.

In June, by change of venue, we were removed from Ray County to Columbia, Boone County, upwards of one hundred miles towards the State of Illinois; and by our request a special court was called for final trial. But notwithstanding we were removed more than one hundred miles from the scenes of their depredations, yet such was the fact, that neither our friends nor witnesses dare come into that State to attend our trial, as they had been banished from the State by the Governor's order of extermination, executed to the very letter by the principal officers of the State, civil and military.

On these grounds, and having had all these opportunities to know, I testify that neither Mr. Smith nor any other "Mormon" has the least prospect for justice, or to receive a fair and impartial trial in the State of Missouri.

If tried at all, they must be tried by authorities who have trampled all law under their feet, and who have assisted in committing murder, robbery, treason, arson, rape, burglary, and felony, and who have made a law of banishment, contrary to the laws of all nations, and executed this barbarous law with the utmost rigour and severity.

Therefore Mr. Smith and the "Mormons" generally have suffered the end of the law, of which they had no choice; and therefore the State of Missouri has no further claims whatever upon any of them.

I furthermore testify that the authorities of other States who would assist Missouri to wreak further vengeance upon any individual of the persecuted "Mormons" are either ignorantly or wilfully aiding and abetting in all these crimes.

Cross-examined. He states that he was very intimate with Mr. Smith all the time he resided in the State of Missouri, and was with him almost daily; and that he knows positively that Mr. Smith held no office, either civil or military, either real or pretended, in that State; and that he never bore arms or did military duty, not even in self-defence; but that he was a peaceable, law-abiding, and faithful citizen, and a preacher of the Gospel, and exhorted all the citizens to be peaceable, long-suffering, and slow to act, even in self-defence.

He further stated that there was no fortress in Far West, but a temporary fence made of rails, house logs, floor planks, waggons, carts, &c., hastily thrown together, after being told by General Lucas that they were to be massacred the following morning, and the town burnt to ashes, without giving any information by what authority. And he further states that he only escaped himself from that State by walking out of the jail when the door was open to put in food, and came out in obedience to the Governor's order of banishment, and to fulfil the same.

PARLEY P. PRATT.

(To be continued.)

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

SATURDAY, JULY 16, 1859.

PREACHING THE GOSPEL—NECESSITY FOR PREPARATION.—We hope our "Hints to Presiding Elders and Preachers" in a former Number of the *Star* have been faithfully read and carefully digested and received in the true spirit of the Gospel by all the brethren whom they fitted, and applied to *themselves;* and that all have profited by them and corrected anything which may have been wrong.

If any of our brethren were shocked at our request in the last *Star* that they would *prepare* and *qualify* themselves to preach the Gospel, we hope they have recovered and their nerves become quieted by this time, so that they may be able to receive some further counsel and more fully understand our views on the subject. If there were any who thought that they needed no more preparation—that they had already acquired all the knowledge and information and possessed all the qualifications necessary to preach the Gospel, and that there was nothing more for them to learn—no improvement for them to make, and that our remarks were not intended for them, we hope they will at once discard the foolish notion and believe us when we assure them that they were the very persons we *did* intend them for—that they were written expressly for them, and that until they can appreciate them, cheerfully apply them to themselves, and feel that the cap was made expressly for them and fits them exactly, and can put it on and wear it in humility, they will never become efficient nor accomplish much in preaching the Gospel. We therefore advise them to make another trial for a personal application of all that has heretofore been said upon the subject, and speedily put themselves in readiness to hear and learn still more of their duties and obligations as Elders of Israel.

If they will reflect for a moment upon the nature and magnitude of the work which they are engaged in, and realize that it is as much a reality as the building of a mansion by masons, carpenters, and joiners,—that the labour to be bestowed by the Elders in building up and establishing the kingdom of God on the earth is as real and practical, and equally requires knowledge, judgment, and skill to accomplish it, only that as the work to be performed in one case is immensely greater and more important than the other, so also are the preparation and skill required to perform it immensely greater and more important. If the Elders would bear these facts in mind, they would not perhaps be surprised at our earnestness and perseverance in keeping this subject before their minds. If a mansion has to be built, and men present themselves for employment in erecting this building, claiming to be workmen qualified for the task, who, when they are set to work, either from a want of understanding the nature of the work to be done, or from carelessness and indifference to the plan and instructions of the architect or the counsel, order, and directions of the foreman or master-builder, or from stupidity or stubbornness, refuse to observe these things and blunder and flounder along in their own ignorant or haphazard way, putting in sand where there should be brick, daubing on mortar where there should be polished marble, or piling up stone where there should be beams and timber, regardless of the fitness of things, the symmetry or durability of the building, and in contempt of or indifference to the counsels, instructions, and remonstrances of the architect and master-workman, they forfeit the wages which had been promised them

for their labours and skill. And not only so, but they may be called to an account, by the Lord of the mansion, for the material wasted, time lost, and injury done to the building by their bungling, unwise, and inartistic labours.

If the unskilful, careless, or stubborn workman on the temporal building forfeits his wages and is held accountable for the injury arising from his want of skill, how much more should the Elder who presents himself as a labourer in building up and establishing the kingdom of God forfeit the blessings which he would otherwise be entitled to, and be held accountable for the injury which the cause may sustain by a misapplication of time and labour through inexcusable ignorance, indifference, stupidity, or stubbornness, or by perversion and misrepresentation of its doctrines and laws. But we desire to call the particular attention of the Elders to the following remarks on the subject of preparing themselves to preach the Gospel.

We are aware that the opinion has prevailed to a very great extent, (and we have reason to believe that the Mission is by no means free from it now,) that no preparation is necessary for preaching the Gospel—that it is sectarianism and argues want of faith in an Elder to read, study, and reflect upon the principles of the Gospel, of life and salvation, of the kingdom of God and eternal truth, or anything pertaining thereto, as they are laid down in the Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, or any other authorized and Divinely-inspired publication. The prozy, sleepy, lifeless fashion which the generality of priests of various religious denominations of the day have adopted of writing off their discourses and reading them from the pulpit has been strongly disapprobated and condemned, and the Elders have been counselled not to follow it; and we are rejoiced that it is so, for we do not believe that the Lord is pleased with, or that the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, attends upon any such preaching. But in this, as in many other things, some of the Elders, through ignorance and a mistaken zeal to show that the Gospel has made them free, and their contempt for written discourses, have gone just as far out of the way and committed equally as great and deplorable an error in the opposite extreme. They not only discard the written and studied sermon, but have discarded or rather laid aside the written *Word*, and neglected to read or study the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants, or inform themselves of the doctrines, precepts, laws, and ordinances therein, or to read and study any other Divinely-inspired work or publication of the Church for the purpose of acquiring information and preparing themselves to unfold the principles of the Gospel, but vainly and arrogantly assumed that the Holy Ghost will and does supply them with all necessary information and bestow every requisite qualification. Their discourses are necessarily void of object, point, argument, interest, talent, wisdom, or sense. An error which in its effects on a congregation or upon the honest inquirer is quite as deleterious, and to the cause of truth quite as disastrous as that of writing and reading the discourses. On the whole, we believe the error is the greater of the two. Certainly we should prefer the written sermon to a pointless and unintelligible harangue. There may be little or none of the true principles or doctrines of the Gospel contained in the sermon, but there are at least thought, point, and argument in it, even if erroneous. There may be no life or energy in it, but there may be intellect, object, and aim. If we cannot derive any permanent good or acquire any real information, we can at least sit quietly or sleep comfortably under it, and our ears are not pained nor our nervous system upset by the dying groans of the English language as it falls horribly mangled and mutilated from the lips of the speaker. The aimless, pointless, objectless, and senseless "talk" of the Elder who discards all reading, study, and preparation may have life in it, and so has the braying of a donkey; and although it may have

force, energy, and action, it lacks argument, sense, order, and intelligence; and we have often thought that the Saints, and more especially strangers, must be possessed of a remarkable degree of patience and be singularly endowed with the power of endurance to enable them to sit it out quietly.

We are well aware that the Elders now in the Mission are not the originators of the non-preparation and non-study doctrine. They have received it from those to whom the Saints have heretofore looked for instruction and from whom they have expected correct doctrine. There have not been wanting those among the many who have been sent here from Zion who have held to and propagated this doctrine, neither have there been wanting those in this land who have been willing to receive and cherish and act upon it, and who yet hold to it. We by no means believe this doctrine of non-preparation to be general; but there are remnants of it in many places, and we wish to thoroughly purge the Mission from it and to see the Elders correcting their erroneous views and coming to understand correct doctrine in this as well as in all other things. We believe that this doctrine obtains more among the local Priesthood than anywhere else, and that perhaps the active Elders, as a body, were never more universally free from it than at present, and that in many places the local Elders are also tolerably free from it. Nevertheless, we are sorry to say that it obtains to some extent among both classes. We wish and are determined to thoroughly root it out.

Elders should learn to discriminate and avoid extremes. Common sense and sound judgment should be exercised, if they would be useful and efficient in the work of God.

GOOD IN EVIL.

BY ELDER JOHN WILLIAMS.

A great poet and excellent judge of mankind has said, "There is a soul of goodness in things evil." There is scarcely anything in the world, either among men or things, that is entirely good or bad. Both are made up of a strange mixture of wisdom and folly, vice and virtue, good and evil. And, however humbling to our pride such a fact may be, if properly considered, we must perceive in it, as in all other things, the hand of a kind and watchful Providence overruling everything for our ultimate good. For man to appreciate a thing, it is necessary that he should to a greater or less extent be acquainted with its opposite; and this rule holds good, whether it is applied to moral or to physical things. Without cold, we could not appreciate heat; without the darkness of night, we could not perceive the beauty of the sunlight; without folly, we should not be sensible of wisdom; without trouble, few would be our joys. Indeed, the existence of all our sensations, whether of pain or pleasure, depend in a measure on our ability to compare them with others. The history of the world is the history of a war between the two great powers, good and evil. From the time when the Tempter first incited woman to evil, up to the last manifestation of its power amongst us, this war has been waged. The heart of man has been the battle-ground, the possession of which is the object of this strife; and although there are and have been many seeming victories, yet the ground has never been entirely in the possession of either combatant; for, let a man be ever so wicked,—let him be so steeped in crime that his heart may be likened unto a dry and arid desert, over which the scorching, drifting sands of evil seem to hold dominion,—yet, if you seek it, you will still find some green and shady oasis—a spring of purity—a well of truth and goodness, which, when the filth which encumbers it shall be

removed, will burst forth pure as at the first, changing with its fertilizing waters the thirsty desert into a blooming garden, containing much that is bright and beautiful—a soul of goodness in a wilderness of evil.

On the other hand, there is no man so good but there is some portion of evil in his composition, which, like a cork on the water, though he may sink it ever so often, will come to the surface in defiance of his better nature. Thus we see that while none are altogether bad, none are entirely good; and it will be well if we bear this fact in mind in our dealings with each other and the world.

There are many cases in the treatment of which this fact seems to be lost sight of. It is often the case in families in which there is a child who has the reputation of being wicked, that, instead of seeking for the good in its nature and bringing it out, they confine themselves to punishing its faults. The result is that our streets and jails are filled with criminals, the greatest part of whom might have been saved, had less force and more gentleness been used by those who had the charge of their youth. Nations, in their administration of justice, have committed the same mistake by confining their efforts for the suppression of crime to mere punishment of the criminal, which, instead of diminishing, has increased the evil sought to be cured. Instead of plucking out the weed when young, they let it grow until it has seeded; and then the attempt to destroy the old plant spreads the seed wider. This is the case sometimes among the families of the Saints. A child is indulged and left to have its own way, or, what is equally bad, is beaten and kept down with undue severity, so that when it has the power it flies to the opposite excess. In both cases it is more the fault of the parent than anything else that makes that child evil. Such parents reap their just reward in the disobedience of their children. They have them as they reared them. But let them not despair, but try to undo what they have done, cultivate the little good that is left, and let it not be lost for want of help. Let the past be a warning to them. Men are but "children of a larger growth;" and these remarks are true of them as well as of children. If any see a fault or sin in another, let them not by uncharitableness increase it, but, by extending a helping hand, save him that is sinking. Despise no man because of his imperfections, but remember the caution—"Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall." Take warning by others; but be cautious lest you compliment yourself on being better than your fellows, for that moment you are losing. But rather let his fall increase your diligence; and watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation, whether in speaking or thinking.

Let us be cautious how we judge either of men or things; for that in which we think there is evil often contains much that is good; and, on the other hand, that which we may esteem good may contain the germ of a great evil. Avoid hasty judgments, especially of the actions and motives of others; for "there is a soul of goodness in things evil," would men but observedly distil it out.

WAR-SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

BY EBENEZER TUCKER.

The events of every day only prove to those who have the Spirit of God (which is the spirit of discernment,) the truth of our most holy religion. How repeatedly have we been told that peace was taken from the earth! and those who have watched the events of the last few years, can realize the truth of the prophecy; and while the world are boasting of their intelligence and enlightenment, crying, "Peace! peace! when there is no peace," all nations are striving to invent the most deadly weapons and engines of destruction, calculated to spread havoc and dismay among their fellow-men.

We might take a view of the events of the last few years, commencing with the great Russian war, which cost millions of money and tens of thousands of men, and which spread misery and mourning in

almost every family in England, not to mention the incalculable loss to other nations who were engaged in it; and when, at last, peace was concluded, we had hardly finished rejoicing at the termination of a deadly struggle, when the news came of the Indian mutiny, and of the frightful massacre of our countrymen and countrywomen there.

At the time we may hope that that has been brought to a successful termination, all Europe seem preparing for a general war, in which several gigantic combatants are already engaged, and the extent of which cannot be conceived,—but, if we may judge by the magnitude of the preparations that are being made and the unparalleled horrors of the battles already fought, such a one as the world has not seen for ages.

As Saints of God, we can look on these things, knowing that they are only God's just purposes rolling on, remembering the words of Jesus, "When ye hear of wars and rumours of wars, let not your hearts be troubled."

We should also remember the warning of the angel—"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and receive not of her plagues," and gather to Zion, the only place of safety. Saints, let not a day pass without some effort for your emigration, for you know not how soon the door may be shut; and then who can say when it will again be opened?

CORRESPONDENCE.

ENGLAND.

4, Fox Terrace, Dewsbury Road,
Leeds, July 1, 1859.

President Asa Calkin.

Dear Brother,—Knowing your anxiety for the prosperity of the cause and welfare of the people of God, I embrace the present opportunity of informing you of our past movements and present condition, that thereby you may be better able to judge whether this people have possessed the prevailing spirit of the times, understood their duties, and discharged them.

I take great pleasure in stating that, with one exception, I believe, the Conference Presidents and their assistants, the Travelling Elders, have greatly enjoyed the spirit of their callings, and have faithfully devoted their energies to the work, improving the condition of the Saints, and making known to strangers the principles of our sacred cause. And in proportion as the Priesthood have been thus dedicated to the service of God, so have the Saints in all the Branches and Conferences been improving day by day. As the faithful Saints grow in the Church, they become more dissatisfied with meaningless words and sentences, and hunger for the word of truth as imparted through the Priesthood by its Divine Spirit.

As this is the feature of the faithful in the Church, we perceive the worth of your instructions in the Editorials as to conducting our meetings, &c., and the importance of strictly carrying them out; and the more careful we are to do so, the larger and more interesting become our private and public meetings.

The Pastorate at this time numbers 1,064. We have baptised 54. Of course, our number is reduced since last I wrote you; but this is accounted for by those emigrated, excommunicated, removed, &c. I am pleased to say that the Pastorate at this time is in as good a condition as could be expected. The local officers are cheerful, are improving their minds, are seeking to make themselves as useful as possible, and at the present time are being used by their presiding officers in a manner that tells for the good of the work; for we believe that if a man is worthy of the Priesthood, his labours are worth something; and thus we seek to employ all in doing those things for which they are best adapted.

I am happy also to say that this people are not only increasing in faith and good desires, but are showing their interest in the cause of salvation by their works and liberality; for, during the past six months, our Tithing has been increasing; and as you have often spoken upon the necessity of the Saints embracing "their day of opportunities" for doing the required work, we have endeavoured to make our-

selves acquainted with every Church movement, and have sought to perform it in its right time. And as you have so kindly shown the Saints the importance of saving their means to deliver themselves from the house of bondage, so we have endeavoured to obtain the spirit of your instructions, to enable us to lay the importance of that matter before the people; and I think, considering the few who pay and their circumstances, that we have done well; for in the last half-year we have received for that purpose the sum of £472, being £291 more than was paid the previous year. Every other fund has gradually increased, and all your requirements have been punctually met; and I feel assured, if we continue to seek the Holy Spirit to enable us to understand and carry out your instructions in future, that we shall continue to prosper.

Ever praying that God in his abundant goodness will bless you and your fellow-labourers, and make your labours pleasant and profitable, as they have been in the past, I remain, as ever, yours faithfully,

CHARLES F. JONES.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

(Concluded from page 432.)

(From the *Ballymena Observer* of June 25, 1859.)

"On the evening of Sunday last, another open-air meeting for prayer and exhortation was held at Ballymena, on the premises which had been occupied for a for a similar purpose on the preceding Sabbath. The ground was moist, and slight rain-showers were falling at intervals; notwithstanding which, fully 3,000 people of Ballymena and the adjoining districts were in assemblage at seven o'clock. . . . Several cases of 'conviction' had occurred at an earlier period of the evening; and, after the usual outburst of agony, the parties had recovered sufficient strength to leave the park, with the assistance of their friends. But the concluding portion of the services was marked by a powerful impression upon the people, under the mysterious influence of which six or eight individuals among the audience were suddenly prostrated, uttering cries of agonising penitence, and loudly beseeching God, for Christ's sake, to pardon their iniquities. The influence upon these parties was exhibited in some varieties of tone and attitude. A strong young woman of the middle class, who wrapped her face within her mantle, and, amid suffocating sobs, the continual prayer of her over-burthened heart was, 'O Jesus, pity me this night!' Others were extended in great agony upon the grass; and one poor girl was praying fervently and hopefully, her head supported in the lap of a more aged female. Her hands were clasped and elevated, her eyes were fixed upward, and the tone of her solemn voice was [un]natural. Some of her expressions were to the following effect:—'Lord Jesus, I am a sinner, but thou canst save me!' 'Oh, pluck me as a brand from the burning!' 'I can do nothing—oh, I can do nothing for myself; but thou art my shield and my Redeemer—thou art the strong rock of my salvation! Oh, come to my relief! Oh, come—come—come!' The poor supplicant then fell back apparently exhausted, and we passed to another densely-crowded circle, but were unable to obtain a full view of the interior. We understand that it contained four or five penitents in various attitudes—some sitting, and others at full length upon the ground; but we heard one female voice exclaiming in accents of heart-rending despair—'Oh, I am lost, I am lost!' 'I am a God-forsaken sinner!' 'Hell is gaping for me!' 'My wickedness is too great for pardon!' 'I cannot pray—Oh, I have never prayed; I am lost'—I am lost.'"

(From the *Northern Whig*.)

A correspondent informs us that the religious excitement in and around Ballymena, so far from abating, is increasing and spreading very widely. The movement is chiefly among the lower classes, but some very respectable people have been affected. We also hear that in some few cases a serious extent of mental derangement has resulted from over-excitement; but it is further stated that a number of very indifferent characters have become sober, and have completely changed their mode of life.

(From the *Revival Record* of July 2, 1859.)

NEWTONLIMAVADY.—Prayer-meetings are held here every night, at which sometimes as many as forty or fifty are reported to have fallen down,—some screaming for mercy, and others remaining for hours in speechless agony.

AMERICAN ANTIQUITIES,

CORROBORATIVE OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

(Continued from page 451.)

(From Bally's "*Journal of a Tour in unsettled parts of North America, in 1796 and 1797,*" published in London in 1856.)

"In the morning I went out to see the curious remains of antiquity with which this place [Grave Creek] abounds. They consist of circular and square entrenchments and mounds, which are scattered at different distances for ten or twelve miles along the banks of the Ohio. One of the principal circular entrenchments is on the very spot where the settlement is built; and three of the principal mounds also are within a hundred yards of the same, one of which is near one hundred feet high, and has trees growing on it to the very top, some of which must be very old: at least, they appear of the same size and age with those which grow in the surrounding valley. With respect to the entrenchments, they are about breast high, and appear, from their situation, &c., to have been intended for and used as fortifications; and these mounds (from which the settlement takes its name,) seem to have been graves, either used as public burying-places or thrown up for those dead who might have fallen in some engagement near the place. I was informed that one of these mounds has been opened, and that it was found to contain human bones, which (if true,) confirms the opinion." "I have seen several of these ancient remains in different parts of the country near the Ohio. On the two Miami rivers they are very numerous; and I have not the least doubt in my own mind but that they were built by a race of people more enlightened than the present Indians, and at some period of time very far distant; for the present Indians know nothing about their use, nor have they any tradition concerning them."

(From the "*Quarterly Review,*" October, 1836.)

"The eye of the antiquarian cannot fail to be both attracted and fixed by evidences of the existence of two great branches of the hieroglyphical language, both having striking affinities with the Egyptian, and yet distinguished from it by characteristics perfectly American. One is the picture-writing peculiar to the Mexicans, and which displays several striking traits of assimilation to the anaglyphs and the historical tablets of the Egyptian temples. The second is a pure hieroglyphical language, to which little attention has been hitherto called, which appears to have been peculiar to the Tultecan or some still more ancient nation that preceded the Mexican, which was as complete as the Egyptian in its double consistency of a symbolic and a phonetic alphabet, and which, as far as we can judge, appears to have rivalled the Egyptian in its completeness, while in some respects it excelled it in its regularity and beauty."

(From the "*Millennial Star,*" Feb. 14, 1857.)

"The ruins of an extensive city have recently been discovered in California, and of another in Texas, where the stone walls of a splendid edifice are yet standing. Also in the Rocky Mountains, in Utah, the ruins of several cities have been discovered, with the walls of some buildings yet standing as high as three or four stories, with almost endless numbers of inscriptions engraved on smooth surfaces of stone."

(From the *Saturday Magazine,* Nov 1, 1834.)

"Artificial mounds of earth in the form of pyramids are of frequent occurrence in many parts of Mexico. They were constructed by the inhabitants of those countries before the Spanish conquest, and were used for the purposes of worship and as burial-places for the kings and chief priests. The pyramid of Cholula is considered the largest of these singular structures."

(To be continued.)

PASSING EVENTS.

GENERAL.—A new instrument of war, invented by Professor Wheatstone, has been received at the Tower, which measures with the utmost accuracy the range of projectiles, and the velocity with which they are thrown. The Vienna correspondent of the *Times* says that Hungary is full of revolutionary proclamations. The inhabitants of Verona have been officially recommended to lay up stores of provisions in every available place, in case the town and fortress should be attacked. 60,000 Russians have been despatched to Khaiva, Persia assenting to the expedition, the object of which is to reduce the Turcomans